

CLASSIFICATION OFFICE DECISION

Title of publication: Doki Doki Literature Club!

Other known title(s): Not stated

OFLC ref: 1900305.000

Medium: Computer Game

Producer: Tearn Salvato

Country of origin: United States

Language: English

Applicant: Matthew David Proctor

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| Classification: | Objectionable except if the availability of the publication is restricted to persons who have attained the age of 13 years. |
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Excisions: No excisions recommended

Descriptive note: None

Display conditions: None

Date of entry in Register: 23 August 2019

Date of direction to issue a label: No direction to issue a label has been issued

Date of notice of decision: 23 August 2019

| | Components | Running time |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| Game: | Doki Doki Literature Club! | |
| Total running time: | | |

Summary of reasons for decision:

The game is a digital visual novel that initially presents as a colourful and benign dating simulator but eventually reveals itself to be a metafictional psychological horror. The game's unrestricted availability is likely to be injurious to the public good. The way in which mental illness, self-harm and suicide are presented for the purpose of entertainment is likely to be greatly shocking and disturbing to children who are unlikely to have the maturity and experience to process the challenging themes. There is also a low extent and degree of sexual referencing and highly offensive language that support a restriction. Children are likely to be attracted to the colourful anime design of the game although the fact that the game is lengthy, has limited interactivity, and relies heavily on text means they are less

likely to fully engage with the narratives. Teenagers and adults are less likely to be impacted by the visual depictions given the static animation format. The manner of the animation means there is little detail and it is highly unrealistic, which has the effect of distancing the player; it is clearly not set in the real world. The publication is therefore, classified as objectionable unless restricted to those over the age of 13 years or older. This classification is the lowest reasonable limitation on the right to freedom of expression contained in New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 that can be applied in order to prevent injury to the public good.